



Hoosier Heartland Adoption Newsletter
***** Serving adoptive families in Indiana *****
Volume 1 Issue 2

In this issue: Welcome, Regulatory Parenting around the state, a "call for ideas" for older children, an Adoption Story, Conferences and Training, Services, Support Groups, Resources and more!

Welcome back!

Thank you so much for all of your wonderful responses to the inaugural issue of the newsletter. It gave me great hope to hear what you are already doing and made me even more aware of the growth we need to aspire to for the children and families we serve. There have been so many passionate stories about the good and the difficult days of parenting. I am grateful that you were willing to share a piece of your story with me. Your children are lucky to have you as their advocates.

Thanks again, Ann Arvidson, SNAP Specialist, ann.arvidson@dcs.in.gov

CORRECTION: To find this newsletter online go to www.adoptachild.in.gov click on permanency and adoption. There will be a link to the newsletter.

Regulatory Parenting for children with severe behaviors is HERE!!

Juli Alvarado, MA, LPC, NCC is traveling the state of Indiana this fall and will be in your area soon if she has not done so already. You will be amazed by the combination of scientific theory and practical strategies that her lecture on Regulatory Parenting will give you to try in your home.

We were also introduced to Family Teaming and Engaging, a new process to facilitate the reunification of families. Both were well received by parents, case managers and therapists in attendance.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW – you do not want to miss this opportunity for free and informative training and you can earn 6.25 training hours or CEU's.

October 13 - South Bend – St. Joseph Public Library – Colfax Auditorium 8:30-5:30

October 27th – Jeffersonville – location TBA

December 1st – Indianapolis/Marion County – location TBA

Calling all parents of older teens...what's next for all of us?

So many people emailed after the first newsletter regarding their son or daughter who is aging out of the system, even though they are adopted they are still in need some services that are on-going. What have other families done for the long term? Who qualifies for a Medicaid waiver? Are they college bound? What is out there? Have you heard of the Guardian Scholars Program? 21st Century Scholars? Has your child been in a residential setting? If you have an experience to share or a solution to somebody's problem regarding older youth please email Ann Arvidson at ann.arvidson@dcs.in.gov and she will edit the responses for publication.

Note: Good news may be here for former foster youth adopted at age 10 or older. They may not have to choose between a loving home and money for college. There is an amendment waiting to be signed that changes the definition of "independent student" to include these youth, which allows for financial aid eligibility to be determined by the student's ability to pay, not their family's income level.

AN ADOPTION STORY

I have heard many stories that touched me in different ways and, I will be asking some of you in the future about sharing yours in this forum. This is a story that has come "full circle" and is certainly told with a happy heart.

I was adopted by my parents at the age of seven. I was placed with them by the Monroe County Welfare Department in late summer of 1972. They adopted me the following spring. They went on to adopt four other children, three of which were wards of the welfare department and one through a private agency.

I am currently a Child Protection Investigator for DCS in Bartholomew County. I have actually been working for the state in some facet of child welfare since 1990. I feel that the experiences I had and what I went through led me to do this kind of work. I look at what I do for work as an opportunity to repay those (especially my parents) for helping get to where I am today.

Lastly, my wife and I were licensed as foster parents in January of this year. Just last week, we were chosen to adopt a little boy. I feel like I am now being given the chance to provide a child with the same opportunities that my parents gave me.

This will be my first opportunity to be a father. My wife has a child from a previous marriage. She did an excellent job raising him so I am looking forward to raising a child together with her.

Sincerely,
John Cole, Columbus, IN

Editors Note: Things are going well - a few "rough spots" which are expected in any transition, but father, mother, and son are doing fine ☺

Indiana Conferences – Save these dates!!

Indiana Foster Care and Adoption Association Conference -November 15th-17th

This conference, in its 34th year, has been well attended because of its great speakers and an opportunity for networking with other foster/adoptive parents.

It will be held at the **Marten House in Indianapolis** - Go to www.IFCAA.org or call 317-524-2600 for more information. The brochures will be out soon!

Pre and Post Adoption Services:

There are services provided for families prior to and post-adoption that many of us are not aware of that may be available in our area. We may not even know they are “ours” to use, but this is an opportunity for your family to receive help before issues arise. These include counseling, home-based- services, respite, and support groups. The agency/provider must be part of the IV-B service network of providers and your county family case manager, or your Regional SNAP Specialist may make the referral for you anytime. There is a listing of services currently provided county by county available and, it can be accessed on the DCS website at:

<http://www.in.gov/dcs/pdf/programs/StatewideAdoptionProviders.pdf>

The county has to have “purchased” the service from the provider for you to be able to use it; however, there are lots of funds currently unspent in each region because so many adoptive parents do not know they could still be provided services not only before but after the adoption was finalized. We encourage you to ask for support before you reach the “crisis level” and seek help as a family – you are all in this together and we want to help you find the assistance you need to locate and access these important services. The State of Indiana is committed to helping your “forever family.”

Adoption Support Groups: Here are some additions to the list from the last issue:

I-PAN – Indiana Post Adoption Network in collaboration with the University of Indianapolis, meets monthly for a support group and has a respite program for those who participate in the monthly meetings. All are held at the Switzer Student Center at U of I and the 2007-2008 schedule is available at www.i-pan.org they bring in a variety of speakers check their website.

Vanderburgh County: this group is open to anybody. They meet on the third Tuesday of the month for a pitch-in from 6:00 – 8:00 at St. Anthony’s Community Hall on First Ave. (across from Hacienda) However, in November it is on Tuesday, November 13th, and will be a Thanksgiving Celebration. It is also a Carry-In Meal. The time is 6:00-8:00PM and will be at Jane/Hiram Davidson's Home. Their number is 812-963-9434. They also sponsor a clothing bank for foster and adoptive parents in Vanderburgh, Posey, Know, Pike and Warrick counties.

Hendricks, Putnam and Morgan Counties: Stephanie Kerner, contact - Heritage Foster Adoption Support Inc., they have been funded by Adopt US Kids to get a group up

and running in this area. Their website should be online in the next month or so. Please feel free to contact Stephanie via email at kernersa@hotmail.com or by cell phone 765/650-8276. They are excited about growing a group and providing support to families in the area and hope to have their first meeting at the end of October – the time and place to be announced.

Hamilton Center, Inc. Has an adoption support group on the last Monday of the month from 6-8 pm, at the center 500 Eighth Ave, Terre Haute and, they provide childcare (but need to know that ahead of time). For information contact: Peggy Smothers at 812-231-8206 or PSmothers@hamiltoncenter.org

Richard Fardo, is an adoptive parent in the **Batesville** area, and he is working to start a support group in that area. He welcomes calls and would love to increase the attendance at their meetings! He can be reached at: 812-934-4314 or 513-532-5385

If you have information about other groups that we have not mentioned in the newsletters contact Ann Arvidson at ann.arvidson@dcs.in.gov or 317-234-4500. We want to hear about any groups out there that we are not aware of – a strong support system is so necessary for adoptive or foster parents.

RESOURCES:

Websites:

www.adoptachild.in.gov Heartland Newsletter: click on Permanency, then adoption, and then Newsletter. To reach a local SNAP Specialist: What can your SNAP Specialist do for you?

www.aTTach.org

www.childtrauma.org – There are four trainings available for free on their on-line university. Very informative, and it is a must for understanding the effects of childhood trauma on our children.

Books and CDs:

Understanding Adoption by Deborah Gray

Being Adopted, The Lifelong Search for Self by David Brodzinsky

Audio CD, Juli Alvarado, “Regulation is Relationship Dependent” available along with her new booklet “Taking it Home” at www.coaching-forlife.com

Multicultural Youth Leadership is a curriculum module for youth professionals to address culture, leadership, identity & empowerment with diverse youth ages 14-18. This curriculum is now available **FREE** online at our website:

<http://www.childrenandyouth.org/youthleadership> They would also be happy to mail you a copy for FREE - please contact SOAR via Deb Gardner at dgardner@uwkc.org